1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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621 occasions, bury or cremate one another, assist each other during illness or scarcity, entertain one another, and make "pleasure" possible. They may hunt together, jointly stock some pool with fish and generally carry on the daily routine of work and leisure side by side. Santal kinship groups are important within the village, but they are not nearly so divisive as Hindu castes. Neither the clan, the sub-clan, nor the local lineage is endogamous nor so structured as to limit social relations with nonmembers. Indeed, all are exogamous and it is only the entire tribe which in some respects is equivalent to a Hindu caste. The Santal village is therefore more internally solidary than a Hindu village of the region, though many clans may be represented.

Though not formally so, the village is in practice almost completely exogamous. This is partially due to the close relations between villagers and to the feeling that if a man's in-laws, and particularly his brothers-in-law, are living in his village, he will have difficulty in "disciplining" his wife; to put it as the Santals do, "She will run home to her house all the time making trouble between her husband and her brothers."

[582] [593]

The tie to one's village is also supported by the attachment to the agricultural land which generally surrounds the few rows of houses and which is regarded as an integral part of the village. Besides the founding spirit of the village there are distinctive "boundary deities" (*sima boṅga*) marking the special attachment to one's own village.

622 628 692 As indicated earlier, the village is tied to about a dozen nearby villages in a quasi-judicial relationship. The head of this confederation is in many respects a multi-village headman. He is generally recruited from that local lineage which first migrated to the area; his tenure and appointment are subject to

MARRIAGE

Look at her, so and so,
Know her, so and so,
If you are pleased with her, place her on your thigh.

The bride-elect comes off from the thigh of the bridegroom's father and bows to him; once again she gives him beer. After this she gives all of them beer and water in a loṭa. And they sing:

Who are they who take water round in a gourd-shell, in a spout-vessel?
Who are they who received the water in the gourd-shell, in the spout-vessel?

Who are they who sought, who are they who got the good omens,
With the water of the gourd-shell, of the spout-vessel?

So and so are the people who take round the water of the gourd-shell,
of the spout-vessel;
So and so are the people who received the water of the gourd-shell,
of the spout-vessel.

So and so are the people who sought, so and so are the people
who got the good omens
With the water of the gourd-shell, of the spout-vessel.

Instead of the words "so and so" they name the septs of the prospective bride and bridegroom. As is known, persons of the same sept do not marry, only when they are of different septs.

When all have drunk they say to the Jog Mañjhi: Listen, Jog Mañjhi, please go at once inside and see whether the rice and curry are ready or not as yet. He goes in and sees that they have it ready. The girl's father then calls out to the wife of his eldest son: O daughter-in-law, bring water in loṭas and cups. She does this and from the loṭa pours water into the brass-cup for one after the other of them, to wash their hands. Now the Jog Mañjhi calls out: O eldest boy, please, you there, bring the rice and curry, the leaf-plates and the leaf-cups. Bringing these they place them first before the village headman, thereupon before his deputy, and afterwards they give to all who are there, to one after the other. Now the village headman makes the ceremonial recitation to the visitors: The wealthy ancestors dried the paddy and the husks; we, Sirs, are drying you; please be especially grieved at this. They answer: Yes, Sir, we certainly intend to eat; only when a great many things are brought near shall we be able to eat, straw-bits to wit, water to wit, leaves to wit, firewood to wit; only when all this is brought together, when it is cooked, when it is finally prepared, when all requirements are in order, then only we shall be able to eat.

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The words of the ancestors are ended. I learnt from Buku guru in the village Pabea in the Paṇḍra country, and I have made you two, Kerap Saheb[1] and old Jugiṣ my disciples. As you two have become gurus, make disciples in the country, in order that the words may not be lost; may they remain generation after generation.

We Kerap Saheb and Jugiṣ haṛam of Citragaria in Nankar have written down the words of the ancestors that our guru old Kolean finished telling us on the 15th February 1871, in accordance with the original paper.

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[582]

The old guru is no more; therefore we here below write a couple of matters that were not written at that time: The twelve septs of the Santals were in Campa again divided, every sept into twelve subsepts. Santals cannot marry one of their own sept, and not their mother or aunt or wife of mother's brother or father's sister, nor the children of these. As in Campa people of the Kisku sept and of the Marṇḍi sept became at enmity with each other, they do not intermarry even now, and because people of the Ṭuḍu sept and of the Besra sept became at enmity there, they do not contract marriages up to this day. Even if they join them together by force, they do not get on together.

Benagaria, the 5th August 1887.

L. O. Skrefarud.
Jugiṣ haṛam.

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[1] The Santali corruption of Skrefarud Sahib.

B Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42

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Fourth stanza:—

For land are they fighting,
For boundary are they fighting,
For homestead are they fighting.

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Here an explanation is forthcoming as to who the Kharwars were. We have already seen that some Kharwars are said to have accompanied Ram Chandra, in his fight against Ravana of Lanka (Ceylon). Now the Santal traditions say that upto the period the people were at Campa, the Santals, Birhors, the Mundàs and Kurmbis (Kurmis)[1] were called Kharwars. The Birhors were outcast because they ate the flesh of monkeys, considered as their taboo.[2] At Campa, the Mundàs were gradually separated and the Kurmbis gradually adopted Hindu customs.

We hear that some Kharwars entered into matrimonial alliances with a section of the Hindus known as Siñs. Gradually their descendants became known as Siñs. They founded kingdoms. Some Birhors also became Siñs.

It is narrated that in ancient times one of the Siñs lived as man and wife with a daughter of a

1. A Santal can now even marry a Kurmbi girl. They are now found more in Hazaribagh, Manbhum and Purulia. [582]

2. The Santals of Mayurbhanj said that they never ate monkeys. [262]

3s Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

But we should add that although in theory, Santals can marry anyone belonging to their *Bòndhu Peras*, various restrictions now hedge them round. Added to these, certain consanguinous relationships (presumably under the influence of the Hindus) have added several prohibited degrees of marriage. Thus we see that they have no cross-cousin marriage, that is, the children of a brother and sister cannot marry. The children of two sisters, although belonging to different clans cannot enter into matrimony as *Balaea* (relationship subsisting between the parents of a married couple) relationship is prohibited between brothers and sisters according to custom. The marriage of a Santal with the widow of a maternal uncle, although a *Bòndhu* woman, is unthinkable, and the Santals of Barsai, Mayurbhanj, went so far as to place the *mami* (the wife of a maternal uncle) in the category of a mother. It will thus be clear from the foregoing that while the matrimonial rules are based primarily on the basis of exogamous clans, degrees of relationship have at least their secondary importance.

Relationship Terms

We give below a list of Santal kinship terms as obtained from Mayurbhanj. The system is mainly of the type named by Morgan as 'Classificatory,' which generally recognises relationships between

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

593 Jiwi boge bàric' gatiñge natañ
539 ,, ,, ,, ,, tingun,
Niñañ jiwi dòre gateñ tire.

Translation:

Father and mother are like Gods,
(But) Who will claim equality with the husband?
All the joys and sorrows of life,
Are readily accepted by the husband,
,, ,, ,, by the husband standing (firm).
My life fully depends on my husband.

Prohibited degrees of marriage

582 In our discussion on the principles of marriage-grades we had occasion to refer to the fact that although theoretically speaking, the Santals have exogamous clans for purposes of marriage, they have developed several prohibited degrees which regulate the marriage tie.

[614] The general rule that the Santal can marry into any clan except his own, is qualified by several restrictions which we will narrate here. Thus they can marry into the clan of their mothers, but three generations are prohibited now.

For purposes of marriage regulations, a Santal's relations and those on his wife's side may be classed under three separate groups:—

(1) Agnates.

3i Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

(2) A woman and her husband's elder brothers, or husband's father and uncles; and a man and his wife's elder sisters or elder cousin-sisters, and wife's mother and aunt.

(3) Non-agnates excluding cross-cousins and (2) above.

Roughly speaking, a Santal may marry into group (3) but not into groups (1) and (2).

Added to these there are the restrictions based on traditional enmity as between the clans *Tudus* and *Besras* and *Kiskus* and *Màrṇḍis* and *vice versa*, marriages between whom are prohibited according to custom.

Relationship taboos

Added to the food and sex-taboos, the Santals have some tabooed relations between whom not only marriage or sexual union must be avoided, but even their close contact is considered as a sin. Thus a husband's elder brother is a taboo to a Santal woman; she cannot even touch him. Wife's elder sister falls within the list; and we learn that during the general sprinkling of water after the *Baha* (flower festival), one cannot throw water on such relations. And Bengali Hindus may learn with some amusement that their joking relations, as between a bride's father and the bridegroom's mother, is transformed

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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105 182 431 being an evidence of fraternal virtues of co-operation.

105 181 421 836 Although ideas of individualism have saturated the Santal social fabric and they now own private property, and have personal ownership over many things, communistic ideas in origin can be easily traced in the custom which allows all bachelors of the tribe to have free access and intercourse with the unmarried girls of the tribe barring of course customary prohibited degrees and relations.

105 593 [611] Evidence of discipline in family life can be easily noticed. Their heads of families are held in great esteem and their commands are carried out respectfully. Although the family is patrilineal and patripotestal, the mother has her natural voice in the family-life and women, notwithstanding all their legal disabilities, have their moral rights assured.

105 181 582 Nowhere is the democratic authority of the appointed guardians of the tribe in better evidence than in the cases of marriage regulations. It is in the administration of these that we can see the will of the Santals finds fullest play. We have seen in the foregoing pages how clan-incest is detested and how the erring ones undergo penance and restored to the tribe. It is the tribal council, the sacred repository of all customs and traditions, that maintains intact the tribal solidarity and purity by outcasting the man and woman who have become

[623] [684]

3i Mukherjea , O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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mediums of pollution to the tribe and thereby to its security and well-being. The Santal does not take recourse to such social ostracism so much from motives of punishment as from a sense of defence against some external sin visiting the tribe; and by restoring the delinquent to the tribal fold, they want to communicate afresh the "mana" (taboo-holiness) which he was supposed to have lost by his action.

In conclusion we may say that there is a close inter-relation between the material culture, the social organization and the tribal government of the Santals. By taking recourse to various means the Santal has, in his own way, solved the problem of the struggle for existence. This we have seen in detail in the chapter on "Economic Life." Here we have seen how by their tribal polity, they have devised measures as to how to live an orderly life to achieve that security without which life on earth degenerates into the anarchy of the jungle.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

881 of the male-child to all the privileges of the
783 community life of the tribe. It is relevant to add
[582] that marriage is not permitted to any one who has
[764] not gone through the ceremony and should one die (without going through the ritual) his dead-body cannot be cremated nor are his bones thrown into the river, the most important step in a Santal funeral. It is, however, frequently seen that the father of several children performs the *Caco-chatiar* ceremony of all of them together.

As an initial step, *Iang hàṇḍia*, is prepared in the early morning. The villagers procure oil and
[622] turmeric. The Headman and *Paranik* drink rice-
[624] beer (*hàṇḍia*) and send for the villagers. The women
[793] then rub oil and turmeric on the bodies of the *Naeke* (village-priest) and their assistants and this is done to all in a customary order of precedence from the village-officials down to the villagers. Rice-beer is served. The Santals dance and sing.

[538] Then comes the turn of an old man of the village, a *Guru*, the repository of Santal lores to recite the tribal story of the creation of the world and the wanderings of the Santal (already narrated in the 1st. Chapter, Santal Genesis and Migration) ancestors till they came to their present habitat.

It is then emphasised that all the impurities of the male-child have been purged away and by participating in the drinking bout of *hàṇḍia*, they

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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581 [589] like their loin cloth and *mòhua*, every one has a 'light' in his house.

With the abundant freedom in social intercourse such as these tribes enjoy, their marriages are generally 582 love-marriages. The proper age for marriage is now twenty years for the lad, and after puberty for the girl in Mayurbhanj. In the past, Santals married [177] adult (about their twenty-fifth year) to men or women of choice ; but now, undoubtedly due to the influence of the neighbouring Hindus, the age for matrimony has come down so as even to infringe the age of consent. Child-marriages are more frequent in Mayurbhanj. Brides, however, must be younger than the husbands but we cannot recall having seen or heard of a wife older than the husband.

595 The tribe does not favour polygamy, unless the wife is barren. The younger brother marries the widow of his elder brother to keep the family property intact. In Mayurbhanj, however, several instances of a man's subsidiary wives came to our knowledge, enjoying a status in law and in the society, exactly equal to their *Mitakshòra* sisters. No 595 instances of a polyandrous system could be directly 835 met with, but the institution known as *Dhàulià Sagai*, which permits a younger brother to share his elder brother's wife with impunity, "only they must not go about it very openly," has puzzled the

596 and grandchildren, which is equivalent to the Hindu "Joint family". The Maori calls it "Whanau" (meaning extended family or family group) which corresponds to the German "Gross familie".

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[614] The family is broken up by marriage when the daughters by the law of exogamy go to another clan. Up to the time of their marriage the daughters are the property of their fathers or the nearest male relatives (if the father is dead), who take charge of them ; when married, they come under control of the family of their husbands (with these as their immediate lords and masters) and this they continue to be so long as there is any one who has a right over them. If such a state [736] ceases, they have no longer any locus standi ; they revert to their original relatives, if they are alive or become sort of guardianless minors, if none such exist they become utterly destitute except for what people may give them or what they may be able to earn through their work. It can be seen that the sons sometimese stablish their own home, when they have got their own family. But ordinarily the sons with their wives live with their father and mother.

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606 **Ghardi-Jawae** : There is a third type, in which the son-in-law is taken as a son in the father-in-law's family. If in a Santal family there is no son but only a daughter, they marry their daughter off and give the son-in-law the position of a son, provided he lives with his father-in-law. If in a family there are grown-up daughters and minor sons, the son-in-law works for his father-in-law without wages for five years. He then gets two buffaloes, some rice and some agricultural

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

Totemism of the Santals

614 The Santals as mentioned above are divided into a number of septs and sub-septs mostly named after some animals, plants, fruits or other material objects. It is now worth enquiring how far the septs and sub-septs have totemic relations with such things. Totemism, in the truest form is not present amongst the Santals. The Santals of our days do not believe in the actual descent of a clan from its totem, and the few legends of the Santals about the origin of some of their clans do not point to any belief in the descent of men from their totems. All that they indicate is that the totem animal and plant had some accidental connection with the birth of the ancestor of the clan. As for example the sept Pauria is called after the pigeon and Chourey after the lizard; and the story is that on the occasion of a famous tribal hunting party the members of these two septs failed to kill anything but pigeons and lizards, so they were called by the names of these animals.

As with other totemic people a Santal also abstains from eating, killing, hunting or destroying the animal, plant or other objects that form his clan totem. Eating, killing, hunting, and destroying one's clan totem is regarded by the Santal as equivalent to killing a human member of his own clan. The idea of brotherly feeling between the members of the same clan is present among them. The marriage between persons of the same clan is considered incestuous which may be taken as a confirmatory test of the above idea.

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4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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SANTAL PARGANAS

Descent of the Santal is always reckoned in the male line and a man has the same totem as his father; the totem of the mother's father's line is not respected. As a female has no clan of her own, she is not a recognised member of her father's or of husband's clan and has not therefore to observe the taboos relating to their totems. But actually the Santal women do not kill any totem animal or any totem plant, just as their husbands do not kill or destory any totem animal, plant and other object. 614

Individual or sex totem is unknown to the Santals. Their totem is hereditary and not acquired. The members of a clan do not wear any distinguishing emblem or peculiar dress nor have they representations of their totem cut or tattooed on their persons or carved or painted on their houses or any personal belongings.

MARRIAGE

The Santali name for marriage is 'Bapla'. Mr. O'Malley is of the opinion that bapla is a word which very probably meant originally mutual strengthening i.e. of the two families.[1] 58 192 114

It is strictly forbidden for any Santal to marry within his own sept (Parish). He may marry into any other sept or sub-sept to which his mother belonged. Among the Santals there is a custom that a Santal can marry a girl who is three kursis (generations) apart. There are some septs which never intermarry with one another in consequence of some ancient feud between them. A Hansdak male or a female 582 614

[1]L.SS. O'Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers. Santal Parganas, Calcutta 1910 Vol. XXII Page 134.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
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582 614 never marries a Murmu female or a Murmu male respectively. Similarly a Tudu male never marries a Besra female and vice verse. An old Santal of Tudu sept told me the following tradition explaining why inter-marriage is not allowed between the Tudu and Besra septs.

582 614 539 Once a woman of Besra sept fell in love with a Tudu man, but the man did not agree to marry as the Besra sept is lower. Then the relatives of the man and woman made an agreement that if between the fight of their sept-animals, buffalo and cock, the cock would lose its life then there would be marriage. On the fixed day before the relatives of the both sides this fight took place. The headman of the village holding the pointed horn of the buffalo in one hand and the cock in another asked the permission of the men on both sides, and when they gave an answer in the affirmative, he let them loose and a fight then ensued between the cock and the buffalo. In the fight the cock took out the two eye-balls of the buffalo with its pointed beak, in consequence of which the buffalo lost its life. Thence no marriage was allowed between the two septs. But now no such restriction can be found.

582 584 836 184 [848] Girls are married as adults mostly to men of their own choice. Sexual intercourse before marriage is tolerated ; but if a girl becomes pregnant the young man is bound to marry her. Should he attempt to evade this obligation he would be liable to severe punishment by the Jogmanjhi, and in addition to this his father would be required to pay a heavy fine.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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SANTAL PARGANAS

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In Santal marriage there is no restriction of age. The bride may be younger, older or of equal age with the bridegroom

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There are mainly two types of marriages practised by the Santal—The marriage which is arranged by Raibar (marriage maker), is the regular form of marriage which is more prevalent but now-a-days the other forms of marriages namely those which are arranged by the couple themselves are not very uncommon.

MARRIAGE

Arranged by marriage-maker (Raibar bapla)	(arranged by couple themselves)

1. Sanga Bapla.
2. Kudam Bapla.
3. Kiring-Jawæ.
4. Gardi Jawæ Bapla.
5. Apangir Bapla.
6. Tunki Dipil Bapla.
7. Itut Bapla.
8. Nirbolok Bapla.

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Raibar Bapla: The practice is that the parents on both sides select the bride and bridegroom. Generally it happens that some relatives of the bridegroom, when they go to some village for some business and find a suitable bride, inform the parents of the bridegroom that in such and such a village there is a suitable bride and if the son is given in marriage with her it will be a good match. After that a Raibar (marriage-broker) is appointed by the bridegroom's parents and he negotiates the marriage between them.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

797 sprang from this pair. Also they correlate *Maran Buru*
797 with 'Satan'. They believe that *Maran Buru* spoiled
177 the first human pair and revealed to them the secret of sexual intercourse, just like the Christian who believe that Satan is responsible for the downfall of the first pair,
[796] Adam and Eve. The converted Santals observe the Christmas Day and Good Friday. Harvest Festivals are celebrated by decorating Churches and offering prayers.

795 **Effect on the Social Culture of the Santals due to alien**
797 **influence.** The social system of the Santal is communistic
177 in nature. In any festival, or ceremony the whole
[181] village takes part. This cohesion is now losing its
[184] strength. For this, missionary activities are to a certain extent responsible. The Christian converts are being cut off from social intercourse. Sometime a christian family is put to great inconvenience. This is particularly
[764] the case when a death occurs for the non-christians will have nothing whatever to do with the disposal of the dead body. The non-christian method of disposing the dead body is by cremation whereas the converted Santals practise burial and subsequent mourning and funeral ceremonies according to the Christian way. There is
[582] no bar to marrying more than one wife in Santal tribal custom. But this practice is strictly prohibited among Christian Santals as Christian religion strictly prohibits *bigamy*. Cross cousin marriage, and marriage with non-Santals is not tolerated by the tribal Santals but among Christian Santals, these things are not prohibited.

[585] The marriage ceremony is held either in the Church or in the courtyards of the house of the bride's parents

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852 reference to the *caco chatiar*, which suggests that it is at the very least an inconspicuous element in the life of the area.

304 The universal custom among Santals of cicatrization of the boys and tattooing among girls may have been connected originally with initiation, though there is no evidence of any such connection in the past and it certainly does not exist at the present time. Boys make a number of self-inflicted burns on their left forearm. The resultant circular scars are usually five in number, but the only rule is that the number of scars must be an odd number, for the odd numbers signify life while even numbers mean death. There may be only one scar and there may be as many as seven. There is no ceremonial to accompany the practice and boys burn themselves as soon as they are old enough to understand the shame of the cowardice implied by the non-possession of the scars. They usually do it when they are out in the fields together herding the village cattle. A fire is lit and a small piece of rag is rolled and set alight. Each boy then presses the burning rag on to the skin of his left forearm as often as he wishes to do so, and the marks remain for life. The operation is known as *siku*. Santals believe that they will be known by these marks in the after-life and if they do not show them to the guardians of the next world they will be eaten by worms as "large as a foot-pedal rice husker". The same explanation is given for the custom of tattooing the girls.[1] Apart from this motive there is no evidence for a magico-religious basis of the practice. The term for tattooing is *khoda*, and girls must in all [582] cases be tattooed before their marriage. The whole operation may not be completed at once, but may be spread over two or three cold seasons during which the tattooers carry on their work. In this area the work is done by women of one of the blacksmith castes who come from districts to the west. During the cold weather they go from one village to another, and they are, of course, paid for their work. The operation is performed with a long needle, and the dye consists of lampblack which is mixed with human milk—if possible with the milk of the tattooer. There is no relation between the designs and the clan to which the recipient belongs. Marks are tattooed on the temples, also on the side of the nose, on the cheeks and on the chin. Designs to look like necklaces are common, and sometimes there is a decorative belt round the waist. Arms are decorated as with bangles and armlets, and there may be a design on the back of

[1] W. Crooke (*Religion and Folklore in Northern India*, p. 296) alludes to the practice among other tribes and castes.

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CHAPTER II

MARRIAGE

582 THE choice of a bride is limited firstly by the strict observance of tribal endogamy. No Santal who forms an alliance with a non-Santal can hope to be reinstated in society. The only cases that occur are found when individual Santals are away from their village community; Santal women working in "the east" do sometimes become the concubines of men of other races, but I have heard of only one man who had taken to wife a woman of another caste. He was a fugitive from the police who had been away from his village for some years, and he was living with a woman of *Hari* caste. The choice is further limited by the rules governing clan exogamy and also by the laws that regulate "avoidance" between certain relations by marriage. A man may marry the sister of his elder brother's wife with whom he is on terms of familiarity. On the other hand, he may not marry the sister of his younger brother's wife. All these restrictions are accepted without question; they are part and parcel of the religious and magical framework within which life must be lived.

581 Then there are many practical considerations that enter into the forming of any alliance between two families. Parents on both sides of the marriage make careful inquiries about each other's families. The location of the bride's home is of some importance. It is not advisable for a youth to marry a girl from [539] his own village. "A hen and a bride from the same village run to their homes", says the proverb. Just as it is foolish to expect a hen from another house in the village to become domesticated in new quarters, one cannot expect a bride to settle down happily when her own parents are so near at hand. On the other hand, if the bride's home is too far away, the burden and expense of mutual visits become considerable, and so it is best to seek a bride whose home is within a day's easy walk from her future husband's home. Inquiries are made about financial stability and health. Particular attention is paid to signs of leprosy, which is widespread, and also tuberculosis. The qualities most admired in brides are a capacity for hard work and good health, cheerfulness and a steady disposition. In spite of the prevalence 582 of pre-puberty marriage in India, it is extremely rare among [584] Santals. In the only case that has come to my notice, an old man of sixty-five, whose only son had died, arranged a marriage

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for his granddaughter in order that she might be settled in life before he passed away. The girl was seven years of age and she was married to a boy of fourteen. Only a token bride price was received. Girls are usually married when they are about sixteen, while young men are generally between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. There is no test of a prospective bride's virginity. The fact that sexual experience of a kind is common before marriage is known to all, though it is not openly or actively encouraged, and a girl who is thought to be a wanton may have to wait for marriage through one of the more irregular channels that are open to her.

The initiative is taken by the parents of the bridegroom. Parents of marriageable girls are not always passive spectators, but any inquiries instituted by them are likely to be tactful and indirect. When the parents of a young man have made tentative inquiries and wish to begin negotiations they engage the services of a friend as a "go-between", known as a *racbaric'*, to visit the home of the prospective bride. He addresses the parents of the girl in some such roundabout manner as the following: "Have you found a place yet for your new cooking pot? I have some friends who are unable to cook their herbs and so they have asked me to find a new cooking pot for them." If the report of this first visit is satisfactory it is followed by an exchange of ceremonial visits. First a party from the bridegroom's village journey to the bride's home. The go-between is accompanied by the young man's parents and some of their friends, a party of five or seven persons in all. Omens by the way are noted, and they are not all left to chance. Before the party enter the bride's village the *racbaric'* goes ahead and tells the people to do nothing that will upset the auspicious nature of the occasion. When leaving their own village or on entering the girl's village, should they see fire, an axe, a woman with a load of wood on her head, a snake or a jackal crossing the path from left to right, they return home and the whole matter is dropped. If, however, they see a full water pot, a cow, a new brass plate, a panniered bullock, the pugmarks of a leopard or a jackal crossing the path from right to left, the omens are good. If all goes well, details of the bride price are fixed, a time is arranged when the bride's relations will pay their return visit and all is sealed by the proferring and acceptance of tobacco and beer.

On their way home from the bride's house the members of the party sing:

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797 The attitude of the community towards the family or the
798 individual who has become Christian is a complex of tolerance
621 and incomprehension. Becoming a Christian is not in itself an
626 offence for which there is an established penalty in tribal custom: the village council does not act and there is no formal outcasting of the offender from the community as there is, for example, when a Santal has married outside the tribe. The denial of tobacco and drinking water, two of the common manifestations of "separateness", are rarely used in the area, though sometimes found elsewhere. Thus, in the early days of the mission at Benagaria, Skrefsrud found that Christian converts were being cut off from social intercourse; by a process that sounds very like intimidation he invited all the leading Santals of the neighbourhood to a feast with the converts and informed them that having eaten with the converts they must now receive them back into the tribe.[1] Where social ostracism does occur it does not last long. There is rarely any need for a family to change their residence on becoming Christian so far as their fellow villagers are concerned, though some Christians do so because there are occasions when an isolated Christian family is put to grave inconvenience. This is particularly the case when a death occurs, for
[764] the non-Christians will have nothing whatever to do with the disposal of a corpse after the strange manner of the Christians. Such predicaments occur only when the degree of isolation is great. With the individual convert it happens sometimes that he has to eat his meals separately from the rest of the family
[152] for a time. It is served to him out in the courtyard rather than on the verandah or in the house, but this signifies contempt rather than any other emotion and it does not last. Sometimes the members of the family show signs of genuine grief. There is no
• [582] reason, from a Santal point of view, why non-Christian Santals should not marry Christians, although such marriages are not popular. The chief discouragement to them and the only discipline against them is exercised from the Christian side. And while relations between a convert and his kinsfolk and distant relatives do become strained, the old friendly relations are often resumed and it is customary for Christians to pay visits to the homes of non-Christian relations and *vice versa*. No attempt is made to dispossess or disinherit Christians who continue to enjoy the fruits of their toil in the fields.

797 This tolerance of Christians in the midst alongside the dis-
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[1] My authority for this statement is a small life of Skrefsrud in Santali, published by the Santal Mission of the Northern Churches.

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bitten by a snake as he slept on his verandah one night. He did not rouse until it was too late to apply any effective remedy. His relatives who were present subsequently told a story of sublime self-command and faith. He bade them farewell: "Do not be concerned about me, but always believe in God; although my body is being destroyed, my spirit cannot be destroyed. And follow the example of my brothers and myself, who never had a quarrel." He read to them from his New Testament. In the words of a nephew who wrote me a letter shortly afterwards: "Many people came from round about when they heard of his death to show their grief. My uncle preached the name of Jesus right up to the time of his death."

Dosoroth ascribed his freedom from the molestation of spirits to his belief in the One God. The heathen Santal considers that the process of transferring allegiance from one to the other is fraught with grave dangers. Christians put themselves beyond the pale of the tribe and so they do on the whole escape from the attention of the malevolent powers to whom Santals as a whole are subject, but when a recent convert meets with misfortune it is because the spirits have been able to get at him. A young man in Barikul died from typhoid about six months after his Baptism, and the common verdict was that the *bongas* had taken their revenge.

Many of the early converts were first drawn to the Church in order to gain some freedom from oppression. From time to time examples occur of people who wish to escape trouble which they have reason to fear from their own people. Families have been baptized when the mother has been accused of witchcraft and they have been persecuted accordingly. In the early period a family became Christian through the man having married a cousin. Although cross cousin marriages are not entirely prohibited, they are frowned upon as they serve to complicate relationships. This couple were subjected to local persecution, and at one stage, I am told, they feasted their fellow villagers in an effort to be reinstated in society. Ultimately, however, they sought the refuge of the Christian community. Their home was within two miles of Sarenga and so they were near to other Christians. Others sought relief from harassing landlords and their agents. They thought that the right way to deserve the help of the missionaries was to do first what the missionaries asked them to do in matters of religion. For although missionaries did relieve much distress, they proclaimed that what they really wanted to see was a change of heart in the people. There

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794 The second main factor in producing tension is that the
177 Christian becomes a member of a community that is different
178 from the tribal community into which he was born and different
158 from any other within his experience. He may know of one or two Santals who have been influenced by the Bengal form of Vaishnavism and have adopted some strange customs in consequence, and he is familiar with the semi-secret society formed by the *ojha* and his disciples, but neither of these provides any analogy with the society of which he now becomes a member.
794 The preaching of the Christian Faith has been pioneered by
797 European missionaries, and up to the present the direction of the
177 affairs of the Christian Church has remained in the hands of
178 missionaries to a greater extent than in many other parts of
152 India. Their apparent superiority tends to make the village Christian belittle his own ideas and institutions. Their superior wealth and beneficence tempt him to rely on their help, and sometimes produce resentment when the help is withheld for a reason which he is quite unable to appreciate, the desire to make him "independent". Furthermore, Santal Christians are linked
794 through the Church with Christians who come from other com-
177 munities. This fusion of diverse elements produces strain at
178 times. There has been no difficulty from the first in taking common meals, and this has safeguarded the witness of the
[264] Sacrament of Holy Communion to the unity of believers in Christ. On the other hand, many Christians shrink from contact with the corpse of a non-Santal Christian. Near the village of Samadi there used to be one household of Christians
[264] who were of Bhuiya stock. I was on tour in the area when the old grandmother died. She was buried in the Christian burial ground, here, as in most villages, a piece of waste-land within the holding of one of the Santal Christians, but none of the local Santal Christians would touch the corpse. The persistence of such ideas varies, one might say, in inverse proportion to the degree of contact which the local community enjoys with other Christians. Samadi is in a far corner of the area and such an incident would not occur nearer to the centre. This can be further illustrated by the fusion that has been
794 gradually taking place in the Christian community through
177 intermarriage. Although the village Christian abhors the thought
178 of intermarriage, a few individuals have ignored the rule of tribal endogamy and have contracted marriages against which there
• 582 are no Christian sanctions. Those who have done so would not find it possible to continue to live in the village community, and

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they are usually men and women who are already divorced from village life. A Santal who has been educated to University standard and subsequently obtained government employment has already been almost completely detribalized. He has little contact with his kinsfolk after early childhood, and if he chooses to marry a non-Santal wife he is strong enough to ignore the sentiment of other Santals. He has to suffer the knowledge that the majority of the Santal Christians as well as the non-Christians are extremely critical of his action and no longer regard him as one of themselves. It also happens sometimes that boys and girls who have been away from home in the mission boarding schools either persuade their reluctant guardians to agree to mixed marriages or force the issue on the community by their own action. The opposition aroused by such marriages usually abates with the passage of time.

While it is convenient to regard education as the third of the factors producing tension in the life of the Christian community, it is in some senses the key to all the rest. To some extent it has been responsible for strains felt through the whole range of tribal life, and this will become increasingly evident in the future with the spread of education. The problems created in the life of the Christian community are the more acute because its members have been eager to grasp at the advantages that accrue from education. Boys and girls in Christian families are sent to the local village school without any question. Immediately they are brought in touch with a new world. In accordance with government regulations they begin to learn to read and write Bengali. Attempts that have been made to give to Santali a more prominent place in the curriculum are not popular, for it has no commercial value. After completing the course at the village school the majority of the children pass into the life of boarding schools at Sarenga, where they remain for an average period of four years. The majority of the teachers at these schools now are themselves Santals and products of the same community, but the type of life is far removed from that of the village, and Santal culture is at best an "extra". The main emphasis of the schooling, accepted by teachers, parents and boys alike, is that the latter should be fitted for higher education or industrial training. Two-thirds of the pupils are Santals, but their language is banished from the classrooms except for about two periods in the week. Prayers are conducted in Santali alternately with Bengali. Although they are encouraged to learn and practise